

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) An absorbent article comprising
 - a topsheet
 - a backsheet
 - and an absorbent element positioned between the topsheet and the backsheet, said absorbent element comprising a fluid storage layer comprising a liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition which comprises a polymeric base material having particles of water-insoluble water swellable absorbent material dispersed therein, the liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition has a total absorption capacity of at least 2 grams per gram and is configured in a plurality of unattached spaced apart zones.
2. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein within the absorbent element the liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition represents at least 15% by weight of the total weight of the absorbent element.
3. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein each zone covers an area of not less than 0.001 cm².
4. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein immediately adjacent unattached spaced apart zones are spaced apart from each other by a distance of not less than 0.1 mm.
5. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein the zones array composed of said unattached spaced apart zones provides a pattern size having a total surface area ~~extend~~ of not less than 1 cm².
6. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein said unattached spaced apart zones are regular ~~or irregular~~ in shape.
7. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein said unattached spaced apart zones are in the form of stripes being rectilinear or curved, dots, circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, lozenges, spirals and their combination.
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein the total absorption capacity of the entire article is of at least 1 gram.
10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein the storage layer consists of said liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition.
12. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein said liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition comprises from about 55% to about 99% by weight of a polymeric base material comprising a thermoplastic polymer or a mixture of thereof, and from about 1% to about 95% by weight of particles of water insoluble water swellable absorbent material.
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein said absorbent element comprises at least one fluid distribution layer, said fluid distribution layer being sandwiched between the topsheet and the storage layer.
15. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 1 wherein said absorbent element comprises at least one fibrous layer, said fibrous layer underlying the storage layer.
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Cancelled)
18. (Cancelled)
19. (Original) An absorbent article comprising
 - a topsheet
 - a backsheet
 - and an absorbent element positioned between the topsheet and the backsheet, said absorbent element comprising a fluid storage layer comprising a liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition which comprises a polymeric base material having particles of water-insoluble water swellable absorbent material dispersed therein, the liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition represents at least 15% by weight of the total weight of the absorbent element and is configured in a plurality of unattached spaced apart zones.
20. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein the liquid absorbent thermoplastic composition has a total absorption capacity of at least 1 gram per gram.
21. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein each zone covers an area of not less than 0.001 cm².
22. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein immediately adjacent unattached spaced apart zones are spaced apart from each other by a distance of not less than 0.1 m

23. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein the zones array composed of said unattached spaced apart zones provides a pattern size having total surface area ~~extend~~ of not less than 1 cm².
24. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein said unattached spaced apart zones are regular ~~or irregular~~ in shape.
25. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein said unattached spaced apart zones are in the form of stripes being rectilinear or curved, dots, circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, lozenges, spirals and their combination.
26. (Cancelled)
27. (Cancelled)
28. (Cancelled)
29. (Cancelled)
30. (Cancelled)
31. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~The absorbent article according to claim 19 wherein said absorbent element comprises at least one fluid distribution layer, said fluid distribution layer being sandwiched between the topsheet and the storage layer.
32. (Cancelled)
33. (Cancelled)
34. (Cancelled)
35. (Cancelled)